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DIALOGUE

Betwixt a

Protestant Minister

AND A

ROMISH PRIEST:

Wherein is shew'd,

That the Church of *Rome*,
is not the only true Church;
and that the Church of
ENGLAND is a sound Part
of the Catholick Church of
CHRIST.

By the Author of the

HUSBANDMAN'S MANUAL.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

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That of Rome

is not the same Church

and the Church of

England is not the same Church

of the Catholic Church of

CHRIST.

By the Rev. Mr. J. J. [illegible]

JOHN J. [illegible] M.A.

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TO THE

HONOURABLE

Madam Anne Newport.

MADAM,



It is the Property
of grateful Minds
to remember Be-
nefits received;

and of Great Minds, to for-
get that ever they bestowed

iv *The Dedication.* . .

them. Thus in all Probability, my very Name may be slipp'd out of Your Memory, whilst the Favours You, together with those Excellent Ladies, your *Mother* and *Aunt*, conferr'd upon me some Years ago, are as fresh in mine, as if they had been but of Yesterday. I have been long impatient to make You some Acknowledgment; and I take this Opportunity of doing it. I know that this little Piece cannot be unacceptable to You; since it is a Defence of that Church, to which You are so great an Ornament: And shall think my self extremely happy if

The Dedication.

v

it find Acceptance with You;
as it is also a Testimony of
that Veneration and Respect
wherewith I am,

M A D A M,

Your most Obliged

Humble Servant,

Edward Welchman.

The Dedication

is in acceptance with you
as it is also a testimony of
that Veneration and Respect

Your Obedient

Humble Servant

Edward Welchman

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TO THE
READER.

THE Design of this little Book is, to expose that Sophistry of the Romish Emisseries, whereby they endeavour to seduce Men into an Opinion that theirs is the only true Church and infallible. This is the Point they labour most, as being the shortest and most effectual Way to the End they aim at. For to go over the whole Field of particular Controversies is tedious ; and besides, it is a great Chance
A. 4. but

but that, among so many Particulars, they fail of giving Satisfaction in some one or other of them, to Persons of the very meanest Capacity and Knowledge amongst us, and then their Pains are all lost. But if they succeed in this one Point, and prevail upon Men so far as to persuade them, that the Church of Rome is the True and Infallible Church, they do all their Work at once. For their Proselytes in this one Point, are so in all the rest of course. They immediately throw away their Bibles, examine nothing further; but wholly give themselves up to the Conduct of their Priests, who keep so entire Possession of them, that they have neither Eyes nor Ears for any body else; and it is to no more Purpose to talk to them about Matters of Religion, than to a Stock or Stone. It is a strange Thing, that Men, whom God hath endued with Reason, for the

Abuse of which they know He will one Day call them to Account, should be so far imposed upon, as to think it safer to be led blindfold in a dangerous Way, and in which to miscarry, is to be undone for ever, than to accept of those Guides which God hath given them; who also bid them keep their Eyes open, and look well to every Step they take, and go no farther than they may be sure they are safe. This is a most pernicious Infatuation, and few or none are recover'd out of it. Wherefore I have done my Endeavour to prevent it. I know that others have done the same; but either in several Pieces, or Volumes too large to be procured and read by those, for whose Use I intend this. Few People will be at that Expence, either of Money or Time, which is required for large Books: And yet it is necessary that every Body should be provided against these Seducers, which are

always busy ; but never more so than of late. I hope that by God's Blessing upon His Majesty's Counsels and Arms, we shall be protected from their open Force. May the same God bless these my weak Endeavours, to secure as many as I can from their secret Delusions.

I have not enter'd into a Consideration of the particular Errors of the Church of Rome: Because this has been done in several small Tracts already ; particularly, Bishop Williams's Roman Catechism, with a Reply. And in another, entitled, A short Refutation of the principal Errors of the Church of Rome. To which this may serve as a Prefatory Discourse.

(1)



A

DIALOGUE

Betwixt a

Protestant Minister

AND A

ROMISH PRIEST, &c.

Protestant Minister,



I R, I perceive you have of late been very industrious to seduce the People committed to my Charge ; telling them, that so long as they continue in the *Communion* of the Church of England, they cannot hope to be saved.

Romish

Romish Priest. I have said it, and will maintain it, that out of the *Roman Catholick Church* there is no Salvation.

Prot. Min. Then all Christians, it seems, must be in *Subjection* to the *Pope*, under Pain of *Damnation*.

Rom. Pr. Yes ; for He is *Christ's* Vicar upon Earth, the *Visible Head* of the Church.

Prot. Min. I pray, Sir, from whom derives He this *Super-eminent* Authority ?

Rom. Pr. From *St. Peter*, to whom *Christ* gave the *Keys* of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whom He commanded to feed his Sheep.

Prot. Min. And what is all this to the *Pope* ?

Rom. Pr. Why, He is *St. Peter's* Successor in the *Bishoprick* of *Rome*.

Prot. Min. That is more than you can prove. But whether you can or cannot, it signifies nothing ; for *St. Peter's* Privileges, if he had any beyond the other Apostles, might be only *Personal*. But, in short, he had no more Authority than any of them all. For our *Lord* sets his *Twelve* Apostles upon *Twelve* *Equal* Thrones,
Matth.

Matth. xix. 28. and gives them *one* and the *same* Commission, *John xx. 21, 22, 23.* St. Paul accordingly, being advanced to the *Apostleship*, says of himself more than once, that *He was behind the very chiefest of them in nothing*, *2 Cor. xi. 5.* and *xii. 11.* and thought it no Presumption in himself to *withstand* St. Peter to the Face, *Gal. ii. 11.* Where then was St. Peter's Supremacy? And what Ground have you in Scripture for it?

Rom. Pr. Did not Christ promise him the *Keys* of the Kingdom of Heaven, *Matth. xvi. 19*?

Prot. Min. And was as good as his Word, when He gave him Commission to preach the Gospel: But you ought to take Notice, that He, at the same Time, gave all the Apostles the very same, *Matth. xxviii. 19.*

Rom. Pr. But He commanded St. Peter in particular to *feed his Sheep*, *John xx.*

Prot. Min. Which St. Paul charges all the *Elders* of *Ephesus* to do, *Acts xx. 28.* And St. Peter requires every *Elder* to do the same, *1 Pet. v. 1, 2.* and this too, not as being Lords over

God's Heritage, Ver. 3. so far is *Feeding* from implying *Dominion*, according to *St. Peter* himself. And I suppose he understood the *Meaning* of it as well as any of his *Successors*. Truly, this is a *Doughty* Argument of Yours; I can give you a much better, that *St. Peter* never intended to leave his Pastoral Office to the *Pope*. For if he had, methinks he should have left him his Pastoral *Staff*. But, instead of that, he sent it on Wonder-working to *Treves*, from whence it never returned to *Rome*, so that the *Pope* is forced to go without one.

Rom. Pr. Whence had you this idle Story?

Prot. Min. Even from * *Durandus* who quotes the Authority of *Pope Innocent III.* for it.

Rom. Pr. Well, but our Lord said to *Peter* alone, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build my Church*, *Matth. xvi. 18.*

Prot. Min. Do but once prove, that by this *Rock* is meant the *Person* of
of

* *Durandus Ration. Divin. Offic. l. 3. c. 15.*

of *St. Peter*, and not the *Faith* which he confess'd, and you say something ; but till then, you say nothing.

Rom. Pr. The Church hath interpreted it of *St. Peter* himself, and you ought to take her Interpretation. For the Scripture, as *privately* interpreted, is no *Rule* of Faith ; since almost every Text, even those that concern the most *Essential* and *Fundamental* Points in the Christian Religion, may be interpreted several Ways : and no *private* Person can be certain, whether, amongst all the several Meanings every Text is obnoxious to, that which he understands it in, is right or not.

Prot. Min. In what you say of the *Church's* interpreting the *Rock*, to be *St. Peter*, you are mistaken. For two Parts in three of the *Christian* World interpret it otherwise. And in what you have deliver'd of the *Uncertainty* of Scripture, you are even *Blasphemous*. For you thereby declare it to be a *vain* and *useless* Book, which no Body can be the *wiser* for ; whereas *St. Paul* says, *It is able to make us wise unto Salvation*, 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Rom.

Rom. Pr. But then it must be as interpreted by the Church; for St. Peter says, that *no Prophecy of Scripture is of private Interpretation*, 2 Pet. i. 20.

Prot. Min. Methinks your own Translation might have taught you better, than to have applied that Text of St. Peter to this purpose. For that says, *No Prophecy of Scripture is made by private Interpretation*. And we are not talking about making of Scripture, but of interpreting Scripture already made.

Rom. Pr. But is it not much safer to rely upon the Judgment of the Church, which is *infallible*; than upon your own Judgment, which may deceive you?

Prot. Min. If by Church, you mean the Catholic Church; that is, the whole Body of Christians dispersed throughout the World; I don't know that she hath given me her Judgment in any thing, unless it be in the *Apostles Creed*, and *Canon of Scripture*. And how to come at her Judgment in other Matters, I know not. If you mean any particular Church, I would fain know which Church that is?

Rom. Pr. It is the *Roman Catholick Church*.

Prot. Min. Must I use my *Judgment* in the Choice of that for my Church, or must I not?

Rom. Pr. You must use your *Judgment* to be sure.

Prot. Min. Then I am but where I was, and must rely upon my own *private fallible Judgment* at last, and that too in the most *important Point*, viz. the *Choice of the true Church*. And how shall I be secure of not being deceived in that, more than in any other?

Rom. Pr. O Sir, She has such distinguishing *Marks and Notes*, that you cannot mistake, unless you will your self.

Prot. Min. Why, Sir, I have used my most sincere Endeavours to find out the *true Church*, and yet you say I am mistaken. I have examined your Church by all the *Notes* Cardinal *Belarmine* has given us of the *True Church*; among which, *Holiness of Doctrine* is one; and having thereupon compared her *Doctrine* with the *Scriptures*, I find her so far from being a *pure, infallible Church*, that she

ap-

appears to me the most *Corrupt*, and most *Deceived* of any *Church* that I know of in the *World*.

Rom. Pr. You examine the *Church's Doctrines* by the *Scriptures*.

Prot. Min. And how should I examine them otherwise? Would you have me take your *Church's Word*, before I know whether she be the *True Church* or not? And how shall I ever know that, but by examining her by the *Notes* of the *True Church*? among which, since *Holiness of Doctrine* is the *principal*, I must examine her *Doctrine* by the *Scripture*; for I know not what else to examine it by. By this our *Saviour* Himself desired to be examined, *John*. v. 39. and the *Bereans* are commended for examining *St. Paul's Doctrine* by the same, *Act*. xvii. 11. And truly it gives me a great *Prejudice* against your *Church*, that she declines this *Trial*, and disables Men to make it, by taking the *Bible* out of their *Hands*.

Rom. Pr. What? You would have every *Body* read the *Scriptures*? Do not you see into how many, and how dangerous *Errors* they fall that do so?

Prot.

Prot. Min. Some, I confess, do fall into very dangerous Errors; but 'tis through their own Fault. The Scriptures are not to be charged with it. For *God's Word is a Light unto our Paths*, and his Law is *Truth*, Psal. cxix. 105, 142. Can *Light* beget *Darkness*, or *Truth* Error? Let a Man but read his Bible with an *humble* and *honest* Mind, pray for the *Assistance* of God's *Holy Spirit*, practise his *Duty* so far as he knows it, and use all the proper Means of *Learning*, as becomes every *sober Enquirer* after *Truth*, and I'll pass my Word for it, he shall never be an *Heretick*.

Rom. Pr. I can shew him a shorter and a safer Way: Let him resign up his *Understanding* to an *infallible Guide*.

Prot. Min. But, *Good Sir*, where is this *Infallible Guide* to be found?

Rom. Pr. In our Church to be sure; for no other Church pretends to *Infallibility*.

Prot. Min. And must your Church needs have it, because she pretends to it? Must she needs be *Infallible*, because she is *presumptuous*? I wish to God she did but seriously consider
how

how *St. Paul*, in his *Epistle* to her, cautions her *not to be high-minded*, but *fear*, lest *God* should *cut* her off, as *He* had done the *Jews*, if, like them, she *continued* not in his *Goodness*, *Rom. xi. 20, &c.* Which *Passage* doth manifestly imply, that she may not only *Err*, but utterly *fall away*.

Rom. Pr. But hath not *Christ* promised, that the *Gates of Hell* shall never *prevail* against his *Church*? Hath *He* not promised to be with it to the *End* of the *World*; and that the *Spirit of Truth* should guide it into all *Truth*?

Prot. Min. All this I acknowledge; but what is all this to the *Church of Rome*, more than to the *Greek*, or any other *Church*? From these *Texts* it appears, that *God* will always have a *Church* in the *World*; to the *Maintenance* of which in all *Truth*, the *Scripture*, with the ordinary *Assistance* of the *Holy Spirit*, is abundantly sufficient, though there be no living, *infallible* Guide in it. And I pray, Who is your *infallible* Guide?

Rom. Pr. A *General Council* duly called.

Prot.

(II)

her, but
ff, asking at this Time ?

hem, Rom. Pr. No.

ness, Prot. Min. Then you are as destitute of an infallible Guide as I am.

not Rom. Pr. But We have their Decrees, which answer all our Purposes.

shall Prot. Min. And We have the Holy Scriptures, which answer all ours better.

rch ? Rom. Pr. But how are you sure you understand the Scriptures aright ?

th it Prot. Min. And how are you sure you understand your Councils aright ? You are as liable to mistake in the one, as I am in the other ; for you have nothing but a private, fallible Judgment to trust to, for the Interpretation of their Decrees, which, by the Way, are not always very plain and intelligible. Witness several Decrees of your Council of Trent, which were no sooner past, than the Divines divided, and wrote against one another about the Meaning of them. Nay, whether that Council it self, or any other you take for an infallible Guide, had all the Requisites of a truly General Council ; and consequently, whe-

whether their *Decrees* be of any Validity at all, is a Question you are not able to resolve. And besides all this, the *Jesuits* and *Italians* say, contrary to you, that the *Pope* is the *infallible* Guide. So that you cannot agree about it : and you want yet another *infallible* Guide to decide the Controversy. With what Face then can you tax us with *Uncertainty* in the Grounds of our *Faith*, when you yourselves are at so much greater *Uncertainties*, in regard to your own? We are certain of the *Truth* and Sufficiency of our *Rule* ; and all you have to object is, the *Fallibility* of our Judgments in the Use of it. Never considering, in the mean while, that, besides the *Uncertainty* of your *Rule*, you, in the Use of it, must, when all is done, depend upon your own Judgment, which is no more *infallible* than another Man's. This I say to you, who are able to read the *Decrees* of Popes and Councils. But as for the *Common* People among you, who are not able to read them, they, by being deny'd the *Scriptures*, can know no more of Religion than their Priests think fit to tell them, and all their

Faith

Faith hangs upon their Priests *Sleeves*.
 Certainly they must have little Care
 of their Souls, if they can be so con-
 tent.

Rom. Pr. O, Sir, don't trouble your
 self for them; their Souls are safe
 enough in our Hands.

Prot. Min. I very much doubt it;
 for I am sure they sin by such an ab-
 solute *subjection* of their *Faith* to you;
 and so do you too, in Usurping such
 a *Dominion* over it. It being contrary
 to Christ's Command, *Matth. xxiii.*
3, 9. *Be not ye called Rabbi; for one*
is your Master, even Christ, and ye are
Brethren. And call no Man your Fa-
ther upon the Earth: for one is your
Father, which is in Heaven.

Rom. Pr. Are you a Priest, and talk
 at this Rate? It is no Wonder the
 People have no greater *Regard* for you,
 since you teach them to have so little
Dependance upon you.

Prot. Min. Look you, Sir, We
 Priests of the *Church of England* aim
 at no *Authority* over our People, but
 what God has given us. And as ma-
 ny as truly understand their Religion,
 pay us as much Respect as we desire.
 We also make it our Business to make
 them

them as *knowing* as possible ; so far are we from putting out their *Eyes*, that they may *blindly* follow our Conduct. In short, we teach them nothing but the naked *Truth* ; and therefore give them all the *Light* we can to discern it. We allow them the Use of all their *Faculties* to examine it. Whereas you'll allow them to examine nothing ; and to put them out of Capacity of ever doing it, you deprive them of the *Light* of the *Holy Scriptures* ; nay, don't leave them so much as the free Use of their *Reason* and *Senses*.

Rom. Pr. How so, I pray you?

Prot. Min. In imposing on them the Belief of *Transubstantiation*, the directest *Contradiction* to *Reason* and *Sense* in the World. For my part, I can't imagine what Course you take to bring them to the Belief of it. Pray, *Sir*, will you try what you can do upon me toward it. I'll give you all the Advantages you can desire ; I'll for once allow your *Council of Trent* to be *Infallible*, and all its *Decrees* as true as the *Gospel*.

Rom. Pr. Enough in all Conscience. Upon this Foundation I'll convince you

you immediatey. I have the Acts of that *Council* in my Pocket. Look you there, *Sir*, in *Seff. 13. Can. 4.* it is decreed in as full Words as possible.

Prot. Min. Methinks I see some Words to that purpose ; but yet I cannot believe any such *Decree* is there.

Rom. Pr. Look again, Man, What ? will not you believe your own *Eyes* ?

Prot. Min. Have not we laid it down as a Fundamental, that the *Council* has decreed nothing but what is true ?

Rom. Pr. Yes ; and therefore since your own *Eyes* tell you they have decreed it, it must needs be true.

Prot. Min. The very same *Eyes* tell me, that it is not true ; and therefore I argue that they have not decreed it. Is not this Arguing as good as yours ? Alas, *Sir*, there is no Arguing from the Testimony of our *Eyes* in this Case. For what Use can be made of an Evidence that contradicts it self ? And now, *Sir*, what Advances have you made toward my Conviction ? Even none at all, though I my self made an unreasonable large Step toward it, in granting you what I did, viz. That the *Council of Trent* decreed

nothing but what is *true*. Let me add to this, the concurrent Testimony of all the other Senses, which, with one Consent, pronounce *Transubstantiation* to be *false*; and then I leave you to consider, whether you have not, by your *Doctrine* taken away, as I said, the *Use* of our *Reason* and *Senses*.

Rom. Pr. Hold there, Sir, We leave the Senses to do their *whole* Duty. But you must know, that the Senses perceive not *Substances*, but *Accidents* only; and therefore there may be a *Change* of *Substances*, even where there is no *Change* of *Accidents*; and *Transubstantiation* may be true, for ought the Senses have to do with it, they being Judges of the *Accidents* only.

Prot. Min. By this you confirm the Charge laid against you, of rendering our Senses of no *Use* to us. For if we cannot by them *distinguish* one Substance from another, we may be guilty of as many Mistakes with them, as without them. You may be an *Horse* under the *Shape* of a Man, for ought I know; and this *Book*, which you tell me is the *Council of Trent*, may be, for ought either You or I can tell, but the *Story of Tom Thumb*. Nay, our Saviour
Him-

Himself might, according to this Doctrine, have been nothing but an *Apparition* of *Accidents*; although the *Apostles*, for some Years together, *conversed* with Him, *saw* Him, and *handled* Him. Thus, by your *absurd* Impositions upon the Sense and Reason of Mankind, you have undermined the Grounds of all *Certainty* and *Knowledge*, and sap'd the *Foundations* of all *Religion*.

Rom. Pr. All this is but meer *Talk*; for we find by Experience, that our People *believe* their Religion as firmly as you can do yours.

Prot. Min. Yes; and *Transubstantiation* as firmly as the *Being* of a *God*. But in so doing, they cannot be acted by any *rational* Motives. For it is impossible that any one should be induced, upon *reasonable* Grounds, to believe Things contrary to *Sense* and *Reason*. An Adherence to such *absurd* Tenets, is *Bigottry*, meer stupid *Credulity*; there can be nothing in it of true *Christian Faith*.

Rom. Pr. And can you imagine, that you have good and solid Grounds for your Religion, a late, *upstart* Thing? If you have, pray how comes

it to pass, that the Church knew nothing of it for *Fifteen Hundred Years* together; and that *Luther* was the first Discoverer of it?

Prot. Min. Why, Sir, did the Church for *Fifteen Hundred Years* together know nothing of the *Apostles Creed*, *Lord's Prayer*, *Ten Commandments*, and the *Two Sacraments*? Was *Luther* the first Discoverer of these?

Rom. Pr. These were known and professed by the Church in all Ages, and are as Old as *Christianity* it self.

Prot. Min. Why then do you charge our Religion with *Novelty*, since, by your own Confession, it is as *Old* as *Christianity*?

Rom. Pr. But are those Things the *Whole* of your Religion?

Prot. Min. Yes; as you may see by our Catechism, which contains the *Whole* of our Religion. Now, what you hold *more* than this, either makes *another* Religion, or doth not. If it doth; you have alter'd the *Faith*, which was *once deliver'd to the Saints*, and so come under the Apostle's *Anathema*, for preaching another Gospel, *Gal. i. 8, 9.* If it doth not; We are both of the *same* Religion. And that *Question* of

of yours, *Where was our Religion before Luther?* must be very *absurd*; for you thereby ask, in Effect, *Where was your own?*

Rom. Pr. But you have many *Negative Articles*: For Instance, *The Pope is not Head of the Church; There is no Purgatory; The Saints are not to be invoked, &c.* All which are *New*, I am sure.

Prot. Min. And why did not you add to our *Negative Articles* this too, *Mahomet is not a true Prophet?* I assure you, our Religion consists in this, as much as in any of those you have mentioned. It is true indeed, that we do deny the *Pope's Supremacy, Purgatory, Invocation of Saints,* and several other *Tenets*, which you have incorporated into your Religion. But this Denial is so far from being an *Essential* Part of ours, that our People should never hear of them, were it not for you, who make such a Noise about them. And as for the *Novelty* wherewith you tax these *Negative Articles* of ours; I confess it is true. For the Errors themselves are of no *long* Standing; and they could not be *deny'd* before they were *breach'd*. And here I

retort upon you the Charge of *Novelty* in Religion. For all the Points wherein you differ from us, are all *New*. And you, by taking them into the *Body* of Religion, have so far set up a *New Religion*, utterly unknown to the *Apostles*, and the *primitive Church*.

Rom. Pr. What? Have not we *Antiquity* on our Side?

Prot. Min. No, in Truth have you not, as to the Points in *Controversy* betwixt us. Your *Purgatory Fire* did not begin so much as to *smoak*, till about the Beginning of the *Fifth Century*, and *flam'd* not out till the Beginning of the *Fifteenth*, when *Eugenius IV.* blew it up with all the Strength he had. *Transubstantiation* was not seriously maintained by any Writer till the *Ninth Century*, as *Bellarmino* himself confesseth, and was not establish'd till the Year 1215. The *Supremacy* of the Pope was condemn'd, even by the Pope, viz. *Gregory the Great*, toward the latter End of the *Sixth Century* as a Piece of *devilish Pride*, trampling upon the Necks of all the other *Bishops* in the World. *Images* crept not into Churches till the *Fourth Century* and began to be *worshipp'd* not till the

the *Eighth*. I might shew the like of your other *Opinions* and *Practices*, which are condemn'd by us.

Rom. Pr. Yes; and of *Prayers* for the *Dead* too.

Prot. Min. I confess *Praying* for the *Dead* to have been very ancient. But not such *Prayers* as yours are, *viz.* for their *Deliverance* out of *Purgatory*, which the *Ancients* knew nothing of. They made *Oblations* and *Prayers* for the *Prophets*, *Apostles*, *Martyrs*, and even for the blessed *Virgin* her self, whom no *Body* ever supposed to be in *Purgatory*.

Rom. Pr. To what *Purpose* then did they pray for them?

Prot. Min. For their *Acquittal* at the *Day of Judgment*; for the *speedy Consummation* of their *Happiness*; and to testify their *Communion* with the *Saints* departed. All this we find no *Fault* with. And should any one put such a *Sense* upon that *Prayer* of our *Church*, in the *Office* of *Burial*, wherein we beseech *God*, of his *gracious Goodness*, shortly to accomplish the *Number* of his *Elect*, and to hasten his *Kingdom*; that *We*, with all those that are departed in the true *Faith* of his *Holy Name*, may have

our perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in his eternal Glory ; I do not know that our Church would censure him in the least for it. I crave Leave to observe one Thing to you, which had not you interrupted me, I should have done before ; and it is this: From the primitive Christians praying for the blessed *Virgin*, we have an evident Demonstration that they knew nothing of her *Assumption*, and Reigning as *Queen of Heaven*. And yet the 15th of *August* is with you a great Festival in Memory of it. What Tradition have you for this ? And what Warrant have you to teach your People, that *Her Soul the third Day was re-united to her Body, and assumed into Heaven, with such Solemnity as no Mortal can comprehend ? That she is exalted above all Creatures, and crown'd Queen of Heaven and Earth ?* She was assumed with Solemnity indeed, if it be true which another says, that *Christ Himself* came down from *Heaven*, attended on by innumerable Angels, bringing her Soul along with him, to re-unite it to her Body. This Journey might have been saved ; for, according to the same Author, He had done as much but just
three

three Days before, to *comfort* her at her *Death*, and fetch her Soul. What need He have made *two* Journeys of it? Why did He not take her away, *Body* and *Soul*, at first? Methinks you make very *bold* with *Christ*, in thus fetching Him down from *Heaven* ever and anon upon your *imaginary* Occasions. But you care not how much you *derogate* from the Honour of the *Son*, so long as you *advance* that of the *Mother*.

Rom. Pr. The Church is not concern'd in the *Extravagancies* of private Writers.

Prot. Min. But surely the Church is concern'd to see that her Children be not fed with such *Trash*. The Passages I have mentioned to you, are taken out of *Manuals*, and other *Books* of *Devotion*, which I have accidentally found in the Hands of poor People. But your *publick* Offices are much to the same Tune; for in Repeating the *Nicene Creed* at Mass, the Priest is required to *bow* at the Name of the *Virgin Mary*, which he there is not at the Name of *Jesus*. In the Mass of *St. Mary*, one would think, by the Application of the Lesson, *Eccles. xxiv. 9, &c.* you ascribed *Eternity* to her: In the

same Mass, you offer up *Christ* himself if the *Sacrament* be *Christ*, as you say it is, in *Honour* of *her*. But this you do too, in *Honour* of other *Saints*, as well as *her*; and your Council of *Trent* hath pass'd an *Anathema* upon all that shall condemn your Practice, *Seff. 22. Can. 4.* Is not all this to advance the Mother, and degrade the Son? Not to mention the Hymn,

*O felix puerpera nostra pians scelera
Fure Matris impera Redemptori.*

(Crimes,

*O happy Mother, which expiatest our
By thy Maternal Authority command the*
(Redeemer.

This indeed, you have struck out of your Missals, for meer Shame; and therefore I insist not now upon it. I would only ask you, Who were then *infalibly* guided, they that put it in, or they that struck it out? Both, I am sure, could not be so.

Rom. Pr. Why, Sir, there was no Council concerned, either in putting it in, or out, that I know of; and I have told you, that the *Infalibility* lies in a Council.

Prot.

Prot. Min. Be it so. But in the mean Time, What is the Church the better for such an *Infallibility*, as suffers the publick *Offices* to be *corrupted* with such *Blasphemies*? And in what a miserable Condition are the poor People, who, being *blindly* led by such *blind* Guides, must, together with their *Leaders*, fall into the *Ditch*?

Rom. Pr. What's that you say? You will deny, ere long, that Salvation is to be had in the *Catholick* Church.

Prot. Min. By *Catholick* Church, you mean, according to a very improper Way of Speaking, the *Roman* Church; an *universal Particular*. In what, I beseech you, doth her *Catholicism* consist? not in Soundness of Doctrine, I am sure, nor in *Extent*. For, divide the Number of Christians into *three* Parts, and there is scarce *one* that she can claim for her *own*. But as to what you were saying: I do not absolutely deny that *Salvation* is to be had in your Church; though if I did, I should do it with as much *Charity*, and with a great deal more *Truth*, than you deny Salvation to us. But, for my part, I am not for usurping *Christ's* Office, and *judging* before the Time; I am not for *damning*

damning more than needs must ; how far infinite Mercy will extend it self even to *honest Heathens*, I know not.

Rom. Pr. I thank you for your *Charity*. You put us in the State of *honest Heathens*.

Prot. Min. Not so neither. I do not deny but that you are in a *Covenant* with God, which *Heathens* are not. And do hope, that through that *Faith* which you yet have in *Christ Jesus*, as many of you as do err through meer *Weakness*, and *invincible Ignorance*, may be saved. But how many of you do, that I must leave to God, who alone knows your Hearts. All that I say is, that many, very many, of the *Doctrines* and *Practices* of your Church, are in their *own Nature* damnable ; but how far they will *effectually* prove so, I dare not determine. No doubt, but our Good and Gracious God will forgive much to *sincere* and *honest* Minds.

Rom. Pr. Amen, I beseech God ; for else I know not who can be saved.

Prot. Min. In this you speak *Charitably*, and like a good Christian. And to be consistent with your self, you must needs acknowledge every *sincere* and *honest* Protestant to have as just Ground

Ground of Hope, as any Papist ; since he also is in *Covenant* with God, and has as just a Title to the Promises of the Gospel, as any other *Christian* in the World. What then do you mean, by your creeping to our People upon their *Death-beds*, and terrifying them, in their last Agonies, with *Hell* and *Damnation*, unless they die in the *Communion* of your Church ? Do you think a meer Profession, the Effect of nothing but *Terror* and *Amazement*, can commend Men to God ?

Rom. Pr. Surely it is something to die in the *Communion* of the Church ; to have the Advantage of her *Prayers*, *Absolution*, and the *Sacraments*.

Prot. Min. Why, Sir, they were in the *Communion* of the Church of God before you come near them ; and our Church affords them all the *spiritual* Assistances they stand in need of.

Rom. Pr. What by the Hands of such as you ? What can your *Assistance* signify ? You are no Priest.

Prot. Min. I'll join Issue with you upon this Head presently. In the mean Time, let us consider what mighty Advantage they can receive by your *Prayers*, more than ours. I have read
your

your Office for the *Visitation* of the Sick, and do acknowledge, there are some Things good in it. But to what Purpose, I pray you, serve so many *Crossings*? And what think you of this? The Priest laying both his Hands upon the sick Man's Head, after a Sentence of Scripture, very *presumptuously* applied, says: *Jesus, Son of Mary, the Salvation, and Lord of the World, be merciful and gracious to thee, for the Merits of St. Benedict.* Again, you make the sick Man beg Mercy thro' the Merits, not only of *Christ*, but also of his most holy Mother, of all the *Angels* and *Elect*. Again, he desires his *Guardian Angel*, to impart to him one *dolorous Sigh*, out of those innumerable ones which *Christ* gave upon the Cross. I thought the Ministry of Reconciliation had been given to Men, and not to *Angels*, 2 Cor. v. 18. Further, he prays his Angel, that the *Mother of Grace* would let him share with her, but in one Groan of her *Virgin Heart*; and receive him into the Number of those, who obtain Pardon through her Merits. Now, to pass by your blessed *Ashes*, *Hair-Shirt*, and holy *Water*, apply'd by you for the procuring of Pardon, driving away the Devil,

Devil, &c. Let me seriously ask you, Are the *blessed Virgin*, the *Angels* and *Saints*, made no more of than *Mediators* of *Intercession* here? Is a *Dependence* upon their Merits for Pardon and *Salvation* no more than an *Ora pro nobis*? And is not the *joining* their Merits to those of *Christ*, a making them *Saviours* together with him? Alas! Sir, these Things are not to be justify'd. Nothing but infinite Mercy can forgive the *Iniquity* of such Prayers. A Man had better be left to pray for himself, than be assisted at this Rate, And yet all this, tho' bad enough, is not the *worst* you do for him. For when you give him the *Communion*, you make him *worship* the *Cross*.

Rom. Pr. You should say, *Christ* that hung upon the *Cross*.

Prot. Min. Nay, the very *Cross* it self. For he *worships* that which he *kisses*; and he *kisses* nothing, I am sure, but the *Cross*; *adoret, & deosculetur Crucem*, saith the *Rubrick*. Now your Writers say, the *Cross* is to be worshipped with *Latria*, i. e. the *Worship* which is due to God Himself.

Rom. Pr. Well, this *Worship* is not intended to the *Wood* it self, but to *Christ*.

Prot.

Prot. Min. And it is acceptable to Him, no doubt, as the Worship of the *Golden-Calf* was: Which, tho' intended by the *Jews* to God Himself, *Exod.* xxxii. 5. was rejected by Him as a-bominable *Idolatry*. Is it not then a wonderful Kindness to a Man, to make him commit *Idolatry* in the last Act of his Life, and to send him out of the World immediately to appear before God, with the *Guilt* of so heinous a Sin upon him? This is the mighty Advantage of *Dying* in your Communion. Pray, keep it to your selves; we desire none of it. And, blessed be God, we have none of this Stuff; we have no *Idolatry* in any of our Offices; we plead no Merits but those of *Christ*, alone, which we know to be All-sufficient.

Rom. Pr. But what *Absolution* can you give to a Conscience burthen'd with the Sense of Sin?

Prot. Min. As full an *Absolution* as you can. And our *Authority* to give it, is as good as yours.

Rom. Pr. You derive all your Authority from a mock *Ordination*.

Prot. Min. You believe the Story of the *Nag's-Head*, I suppose; a groundless and malicious Lie. That our Bishop

shops were *Truly* and *Canonically* Ordain'd, is a Matter of *Fact*, evidenc'd by all the Proofs that a Thing of that Nature is capable of; and hath been often made to appear, to the *Confusion* of the most *malicious* Adversaries. Which is more than can be done for the *Succession* of your Popes. And now, Sir, in Return to your Objection, let me ask you, Are you sure that you your self are a Priest?

Rom. Pr. Yes, that I am.

Prot. Min. I will undertake to prove, that you neither are, nor can be.

Rom. Pr. A very bold Undertaking.

Prot. Min. As bold as it is, I question not but that I shall make it good. Sir, Can you know the Heart of any Man?

Rom. Pr. The Heart of Man is *deceitful* above all Things, and God alone can know it.

Prot. Min. Then you cannot know his *Intention*. Now, forasmuch as *Orders* is with you a *Sacrament*; to the *Validity* of an *Ordination*, a due *Intention* in the *Ordainer* is *absolutely* necessary. For so your Council of *Trent* hath decreed, *Sess. 7. Can. 10.* Since therefore you do not, cannot know the *Intention* of your *Ordainer*, you do

do not, cannot know for certain that you are a Priest. Nay, supposing that you could know the *Intention* of your Ordainer, how can you know the *Intention* of the Men that ordain'd him, and the *Intentions* of the whole Line of Ordainers up to the *Apostles*? A Failure in any one of these, and it is the greatest Chance in the World if there have been none in so long a Time, put an End to the *Succession*. So that your Priesthood is one of the most uncertain Things that can be; and you are so far from being certain that You yourself are a Priest, that you have scarce a *moral* Certainty, that there is so much as one Priest in your Church.

Rom. Pr. But is it reasonable to suppose, that any Man should be so wicked, as to administer a *Sacrament* with a wrong Intention?

Prot. Min. If he be so negligent as not to mind what he is about, the Case is the same. But, I suppose, the Inquisitors in *Spain* can tell you, that there have been found Men as *Wicked* as that comes to; that *Jews* and *Moor* have lurk'd under Priests Habits; nay, I can tell you of a Priest, named *Leopold Gaufridy*, that was burnt at *Aix*

France

France, April 30. 1611. for having compacted with the *Devil*, to give no Sacraments with *Intention*. Now do but consider, what wild Work one such Accident must make amongst you; and to what *Uncertainties* it must reduce you, as to all holy *Functions* and *Offices*. This Wretch, no doubt, pretended to *Baptize* many, to give *Ab-solution*, and do all the other *Offices* of a Priest. How finely were the poor People cheated the while? No question but they worshipped his *unconsecrated* Hosts; and so were trepann'd into *Idolatry*, as your selves acknowledge the *Worship* of an *unconsecrated* Host to be. And if any of those that were thus *pretendedly* baptized by him, enter'd into the *Clergy*, as it is highly probable some of them did, they, thro' their *Incapacity* of holy *Orders*, must spread the Mischief, how wide, God alone knows. In an Age or two it may overspread your whole Church. And who can tell how far it is gone by this Time?

Rom. Pr. Is not your own Church as liable to Mischiefs arising from *vi-cious* Ministers?

Prot.

Prot. Min. I deny not that. But we have no cause to apprehend the same *fatal* Consequences from such in our Church, as you have in yours. For we know that the *Validity* of the Sacraments, and other Means of Grace, depend not upon the Minister's *Intention*. So that let the Minister, in his Officiating, *intend* what he will, the People cannot be deprived, by his Malice or *Negligence*, of any *Blessing* which God has annex'd to his own *Ordinance*. Whereas with you, the *Validity* of Sacred Offices depends upon the Minister's *Intention*; and Sacraments are no farther *such*, than he *intends* they shall be. And therefore if the Malice but of *one* Priest may reduce your *Priesthood* to so great *Uncertainty*, as I have but now shew'd, the Malice of *many* must reduce it to a much *greater*; insomuch, that no Man can have any tolerable Assurance with you, that he enjoys the *true* Means of *Grace* and *Salvation*. And that you have had many such *corrupt* Priests among you, is past Question; since, by the Confession of your own Writers, many, even of your Popes, have been

as wicked Wretches as ever trod upon
the Face of God's Earth.

Rom. Pr. You may fill Men's Heads
with *imaginary* Fears and Scruples by
such Talk as this. But since God
hath promised that his Church shall
never fail, I am fully assured, that
his Providence will never suffer it
to perish for want of a true *Priest-*
hood.

Prot. Min. The Doubts I propose,
are too well founded to be call'd *Ima-*
ginary Scruples. Neither can you an-
swer the Reasons on which they are
built. As for the Promises of God,
which you take Refuge ; they are
made to the Church in *general*. And
I do believe that they will be *made*
good so far, as that there will be al-
ways a Church of God in the World ;
that is, a Multitude of Men professing
the *Christian Faith*, holding all *Truths*,
and enjoying all Means necessary to *Sal-*
vation. But that this Church shall be
entirely free from all manner of *Error*,
you cannot say.

Rom. Pr. Pray, *Sir*, shall this Church
be *visible* or *invisible* ?

Prot. Min. Why, *Visible*, if you
please.

Rom.

Rom. Pr. Nay, then I have you. Before your pretended Reformation, there was no *visible* Church but the *Roman Catholick* Church; and therefore the Promises do all belong to her; and consequently, your surmises about the *Uncertainty* of her Priesthood, are meerly *Chimerical* and *Groundless*.

Prot. Min. How say you? Were there no other Churches in the World but the *Roman* before the Reformation? Was there not a *Greek* Church? Were there no Churches in *Asia*? No Church in *Ethiopia*? You must be extremely ignorant, if you think so. So long as God preserved true Christianity in any one of these, his Promises would have been fulfill'd, tho' the *Roman* Church had utterly perished. And therefore what I have said in relation to your *Priesthood*, is *rational* and *well-grounded*. Nay, God had fulfill'd his Word, had He preserved only those Christians in and near the *Alps*; as indeed they were preserved in a wonderful Manner through all Ages of the Church to the Times of the Reformation, tho' the *See of Rome* labour'd with all in

Might

Might to destroy them, by *Croisades*, *Massacres*, and *Inquisitions*.

Rom. Pr. You mean the *Waldenses*, and *Albigenses*; a Parcel of vile Hereticks, *Manichees*, and the Lord knows what.

Prot. Min. You may as well say, all *Protestants* are *Quakers* and *Muggletonians*. Do but hear what *Raynerius* himself, an *Inquisitor*, says of them: "There was never any Sect more pernicious to the Church than this; and that upon three Accounts. 1. It is of longer Standing. Some say, it hath continued from the Time of *Sylvester*, (A. D. 335) others, from the Times of the Apostles. 2. It is more general; for there is scarce any Country free from it. 3. Whereas all other Sects render themselves odious, by their Blasphemies against God; this hath a great Appearance of Piety. For they behave themselves with Justice toward Men, believe rightly of God, and hold every Article in the Apostles Creed; only they blaspheme the Church of *Rome* and its *Clergy*." When I first read this Character of them, from the

the Pen of a *profess'd* Adversary, and withal consider'd, how the Hand of God had *upheld* them under *Pressures* longer and greater than those of the *Ten* Persecutions; I could not but think of that Promise, *On this Rock will I build my Church, and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*: And that those poor Christians had a much greater *Interest* in it, than your Church of *Rome*, though she appropriates it to her self. For though she hath risen to great worldly *Glory* and *Splendor*, and continued free from Persecutions, (which, by the Way, are no Marks of the *Church of Christ*;) yet by becoming her self a *Persecutor*, and *corrupting* the Faith with so many *Errors*, (I may say, damnable *Heresies*) as she hath done, it is manifest, the *Devil* hath gain'd much more upon her, than ever he could do upon that *persecuted* Flock. And were I at a Loss for an Answer to that idle Question, *Where was your Religion before Luther*? Those poor *Christians* would furnish me with a very good one; and I might say, It was in the *Valleys of Piedmont*. A

Church

Church more gloriously adorn'd with the *Crowns* of its *Martyrs*, than your Pope with his *triple Crown*. Let the Church of *Rome* look to it; the *Blood* of so many *Thousand* *Innocents* cries aloud for Vengeance, and God *hears it*, and will *avenge it*.

Rom. Pr. I doubt not but that the Church of *Rome* can justify its own Proceedings. She flourisheth at present, and is like enough to do so to the End of the World: And you had as good forbear Prophefying against her. Your Zeal overheats you, so that you do not well consider what you say; otherwise you would not have honour'd those People with the Name of a *Church*, to the Constitution of which, you know that *Episcopacy* is necessary; which, since they had not, they could not deserve the Name of a *Church*; and, for the same Defect, the Generality of Protestants are no *Churches*. Herein you differ from them, and they from you. In short, there is no *Unity* amongst you; and therefore you cannot be Members of the *Catholick Church*, which is but *one*.

Prot. Min. Before the Church of Rome can justify her self for the barbarous Tyranny, the cruel Oppression, and the innumerable Murthers she stands guilty of, she must find a new God, or make one. But let her shift for her self as she can, when God shall enter into Judgment with her. As to what you have said, of the *Waldenses* being destitute of Episcopacy, you are greatly mistaken, and * Dr. *Allix* hath sufficiently proved the contrary. Neither do you seem to understand the State of the Protestant Churches beyond Sea; most of them have *Bishops*, though, in many Places, they go by the Name of *Superintendents*, which is but a Translation of the Greek *ἐπίσκοπος*. However, this is an Objection which ought not to come from your Mouth, who are taught by your Catechism, that there is no Order in the Church above that of a Priest; and consequently, a Bishop and a Priest have but one Character. You allow also, that a Priest, by

* See his *Remarks on the Ecclesiastical History of the Ancient Churches of Piedmont*, ch. 24.

a Commission from the Pope, may confer *Orders*; so that, according to you, *Episcopacy* is of no Necessity to the *Constitution* of a *Church*; and therefore you have no Reason to *unchurch* any Body of Christians for want of an *Episcopacy*, so long as they have but a *Priesthood* among them. And as for your Argument, whereby you would prove the *Protestants* not to belong to the *Catholick Church*, because of their *Differences* in Opinions: It is all founded upon a Mistake about the *Nature* of the *Catholick Church*. The *Catholick Church* is indeed but *one*; but the *Unity* of it consists not in the *Agreement* of all its Members in *all* Points of Religion, but in their being united in *one Covenant* to *one Head*, Christ Jesus. Where there is *one Lord*, *one Faith*, *one Baptism*, there is *one Church*. Accordingly the Apostle saith, that *by one Spirit we are all Baptized into one Body*, 1 Cor. xii. 13. The *Protestant Churches* are all thus baptized, and so are all that are truly called *Christians*; and therefore are all of *one Church*.

Rom. Pr. How can this be? How should they that are so much divided be but one?

Prot. Min. I can make this clear to you by too sensible an Instance; and which we all have but too much Cause to lament. The *People of England* are *one* People, forasmuch as we are all *united* under one *Civil Government*; and yet at the same Time, we are *broken* and *divided* into several *Parties* and *Factions*. Now these *Divisions* don't make a *distinct* People of any of us, so long as we all hold that *general Bond of Unity*, viz. a *Subjection to one and the same Legislature*. In like manner the *Protestant Churches*, and all the *Churches in the World*, so long as they continue in their *Union to Christ* by their *baptismal Covenant*, are all but *one Church of Christ*, notwithstanding their *Differences* and *Divisions*, as to other *Matters*. But what are you that reprove the *Protestants* with their *Divisions*? Are there no *Divisions* in the *Church of Rome*? Are you all of *one Mind*, and *one Judgment*? I can tell you, that you are not; nay, that you *differ* among your selves about *Points*

of

of as great or greater Importance, than those which are debated among Protestants. Can there be a Point of greater *Moment* than that concerning the *Subject* of *Infallibility*? Till that is decided, the *Infallibility* you pretend to, and on which you say, all *Certainty* in Religion depends, can be of no manner of Use. And yet you know that one half of your Church is at *Difference* with the other about it.

Rom. Pr. But we don't break in- to *separate* Communions upon that, or any other Point, as you Protestants do.

Prot. Min. Good Reason why : A severe Rod is held over you, and you are kept together by *Force* and *Compulsion*. Were you left, to follow the Bent of your own Inclinations, as Protestants are, we should see as many *Separations* with you, as with them. You prosecute one another with all the Violence imaginable. Witness the Contests betwixt the *Jesuits* and *Jansenists*, about the *Efficacy* of *Divine Grace*; betwixt the *Dominicans* and *Franciscans*, about the

Immaculate Conception. To how great an Heighth are the Disputes in France grown upon the Subject of Father *Quesnel's* Book? And what have not the *Archbishop* of *Paris* and many other *Bishops* suffer'd? And what were they not likely to have suffer'd, had not Providence interposed, because they would not submit to the Pope's *Unjust* and *Heretical* Condemnation of that Book.

Rom. Pr. The Pope's Condemnation *Heretical*?

Prot. Min. Yes, Sir, I scruple not to call it so. For he that condemns sound and orthodox Truths, acts like an *Heretick*. What think you of these Propositions?

“ *Charity alone performs Christian*
 “ *Actions after a Christian Manner, in*
 “ *respect to God and Jesus Christ.* He
 “ *that approacheth God, should not come*
 “ *to Him with his brutal Passions, nor*
 “ *be led by natural Instinct, or Fear, as*
 “ *Beasts; but by Faith and Love, as*
 “ *Children.*

“ *The*

“ *The Church hath the Word Incarnate as its Chief, and all the Saints as its Members.*

“ *To suffer Excommunication, and an unjust Anathema, rather than betray the Truth, is to imitate St. Paul, far from opposing Authority in the least, or breaking the Unity.*

I shall not stand to recite any more of the same Nature with these. There are 101 of them in all; and you may see them in the *Monthly Mercury* of January 1714. Are not these which I have mention'd, some of the most fundamental Truths of Christianity? And yet the Pope hath condemn'd every one of these in the most solemn manner, *ex Cathedrâ*, as false, scandalous, pernicious, injurious to the Church, impious, blasphemous, and heretical. Had this Bull been publish'd thirty Years ago, it had saved the present Archbishop of Canterbury some Trouble.

Rom. Pr. How so? Hath he written any thing against these Propositions?

Prot. Min. No, God forbid. I believe he would rather have undergone all the *Deaths* and *Torments* that were ever inflicted upon the poor *Waldenses*. But you must know, that *James Benigne Bossuet*, the famous Bishop of *Meaux*, was a great Patron of this Book of *Quesnel's*. This Bishop wrote an *Exposition of the Doctrine of your Church*, which he hath dress'd up so artificially, that at first Sight, one would take it to be true Christianity, the very *Doctrine of the Church of England*. This was translated and published here in King *James's* unhappy Reign, and People were strangely amused with it. But *Dr. Wake* stripp'd it of its Garb, and exposed it naked, by two excellent Pieces, which I desire you to read, and could wish they were in every young Clergyman's Hands at least: They are entitled, the one, *An Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, in the several Articles proposed by Monsieur de Meaux, late Bishop of Condom, in his Exposition of the Doctrine of the Catholic Church*, (4to.) London Printed for *R. Chiswel*, 1686. The other, *A Defence*

*fence of the Exposition of the Doctrine of the Church of England, against the Exceptions of Monsieur de Meaux, and his Vindicator: Printed likewise in 4to at London, for R. Chiswel 1686. Now, had this Bull, as I but now said, been then publish'd, the Pope himself would have told us in Effect, that Monsieur de Meaux was so far from being qualify'd for an *Expositor* of the Church's Doctrine, that not he, no, nor the most eminent Prelates in the *Gallican Church*, understood any thing of the Matter: But were all such *Novices* in Religion, as not to know what Books were fit for their People to read, and so Dr. Wake might have thought his Pains needless. But then we had been deprived of two very good Books: And therefore I think the Bull happily timed. It comes out soon enough now to give me great Satisfaction in two Points.*

Rom. Pr. What are those, I pray you?

Prot. Min. The first is, That all the *Infallibility* you have in your Church, serves not in the least for

the *Edification* of it. For if it did, how comes it to pass, that the greatest Prelates in it should fall into, and continue so long in so *gross* Errors, in the Pope's Judgment, in relation to Father *Quesnel's* Book? that they should not know so much as the *Nature* and *Use* of the principal Graces of a Christian, *Faith, Hope,* and *Charity*?

Rom. Pr. And what is the *Second* Point it hath satisfied you in?

Prot. Min. I have been long in Suspence and Doubt, whether the *Pope* were *Antichrist* or not. And I think that this *Bull* hath put the Matter out of Question.

Rom. Pr. What? that he is so?

Prot. Min. I leave you to judge. When *Antichrist* comes, what more *damnable* Doctrines can he introduce than these? *viz. Christ is not Head of the Church. Charity is not necessary to Christian Actions. A Man may draw nigh to God without Faith and Love. To suffer for the Truth, is not to imitate St. Paul, &c.*

Rom. Pr. What is all this to the Matter in Hand?

Prot.

Prot. Min. Nothing, but that it shews there are very great *Divisions* in your Church, upon Points of much greater *Importance* than any among the *Protestants*. Do but look over the several *Confessions* of the *Protestant Churches* and you will find a perfect *Harmony* amongst them in all the *principal* Doctrines of Religion. And after all, this Objection from our *Divisions*, might be made with a much better Grace by a *Turk* or a *Jew*, against Christianity in general, than by you against us; since you, by *corrupting* Religion, as you have done, have been the chief Cause of the *Divisions* of *Christianity*.

Rom. Pr. You make a great Outcry of *Corruptions* in our Church; But whence should it have them? You cannot tell how, or when they came in.

Prot. Min. I have already told you when some of them came in, and could tell you when others. But if I could not, doth it follow therefore that you have none? Is a *consumptive* Man in Health, because

cause I cannot tell him how he caught his Distemper? *Corruptions* may grow upon Churches, as *Diseases* upon Men, by *insensible* Degrees. Our Lord says, that the Enemy sows his Tares in the Night, when Men are *asleep*, Matth. xiii. 25. And St. Peter hath foretold us, that there should be false Teachers, who should *privily* bring in damnable Heresies, 2 Pet. ii. 1. *Corruptions* you have, how you came by them, it matters not; and those intolerable, both in *Doctrine* and *Worship*. And I doubt not but that many in your Communion are in their Hearts ashamed and weary of them. But they are bound upon you, by your Pretence to *Infallibility*, a *Snare* of the Devil's, which, when you are once entangled in any Error, as you are in very many, will not suffer you to break loose. And that you are justly charged with such *Errors* and *Corruptions*, I dare undertake to demonstrate to you, if you will give me Leave to go over the *Particulars* in which you differ from us.

Rom. Pr. I have not Time for that now; and shall stay only to propose one Argument to you, which if you can answer, I have done.

Prot. Min. What is that, I pray you?

Rom. Pr. It is the *Corruption of your Lives*. If your Faith were so pure as you say it is, whence is it that it produceth no better *Fruit*?

Prot. Min. I must confess that you pinch me more in this, than in any thing you have hitherto said. All that I can reply to you is, that the *Faith and Doctrine* of our Church is not at all answerable for this; and that it is no new Thing for Men to hold the Truth in *Unrighteousness*. The *Jews* were once the only People that profess'd the true Religion; and yet were, at the same Time, so corrupt in their *Morals*, that, as the Prophet tells them, they were a *Comfort even to the Men of Sodom*. Blessed be God, Things are not yet come to that wretched pass with us; and you have no cause to exult and triumph

umph over our Wickedness. For if we are *bad*, you are *worse*. We maintain no Doctrines that have any the least *Tendency* toward the *Corruption* of Mens Morals, or *encourage* them in *vicious* Practices. Whereas you do: Witness the vile Doctrines of your *Casuists*; according to which, a Man may allow himself in the Practice of the *worst* of Crimes, as Mr. *Paschall* hath sufficiently proved, in his *Provincial Letters* against the *Jesuits*; and they could make no other Defence for themselves, but that your *School-men* taught the same. And what an *Encouragement* must you needs give to *Sinners* by your Doctrine of *Penance* and *Indulgences*? By which you teach Men, that they may be put into a *State of Grace* by a Priest's *Absolution*, upon an Act of *Attrition*; and as for the *temporary* Pains that remain to be endured, these may be remitted by *Papal Indulgences*, or *Masses* said for them after they are Dead.

Rom. Pr. It doth not appear, that our People make any such ill Use of the Doctrines you mention. And as for what you say, that we are worse than you; I bid you Defiance upon this Head. Shew me a Nation in our Communion, I had almost said, under the Cope of Heaven, in which Iniquity abounds more than in this. Fornication and Adultery are made a Jest with you. You have lost all Reverence for the most solemn Oaths. You are torn in Pieces by Faction and Discord. The truly generous English Spirit is so far lost, that for a Man to lay his Country's Interest to Heart, and to prefer that before his private, is to incur the Imputation of Folly and Madness: Thus have you made it the lightest thing in the World, to sacrifice the Honour and Welfare of the Publick, (Things held Sacred, even among Heathens) to the most insatiable Ambition and Avarice. And yet you of the Clergy, as you call your selves, either hold your Peace, like dumb Dogs, or preach smooth Things. Did you think your
selves

selves *Ambassadors* of Christ, as all
 true *Clergymen* are, you would re-
 buke with all Authority, you would
 cry aloud, and spare not for any
 Man's *Quality* or *Power*. But you
 are afraid of giving Offence ; and
 by a pleasing Eloquence, endeavour
 to recommend your selves to the *Af-*
fection and *Esteem* of your Audi-
 tors, rather than the necessary *Du-*
ties of Religion to their *Practice*.
 You dare not lay their Sins before
 them, and speak *Home* to their *Con-*
sciences, for fear of Spoiling your
Preferment.

Prot. Min. I am too little ac-
 quainted with the World, to judge
 whether there be not more of *Bit-*
terness in this *Invective* of yours, than
 of *Truth*. If Things are so bad
 with us as you say, it is high Time
 they were amended ; for it is im-
 possible that any Nation should
 stand under so *general* a Corruption
 long. But all this heavy Charge
 signifies nothing to the Matter in
 Hand ; because it reacheth not to
 the *Constitution* and *Doctrines* of our
 Church, which alone I have taken
 upon

upon me to defend, and not the *Conduct* of our Lives: Though, as to this, I might stop your Mouth with a Recrimination. But I delight not in such Work. I only desire you to consider us *impartially*, and survey us *round*, and then you will find that we have a *bright*, as well as a *dark* Side. For what Church in the World hath produced more *noble* Instances of *Piety*, than *ours* hath of late done, and doth to this very Day? What glorious Efforts have been made, within these *Twenty* Years last past, for the *Suppression* of *Vice*, and *propagating* Christianity, both at Home and Abroad? You see *poor* Ministers in a fair Way to be *competently* maintained, many of their Widows *actually* provided for, and *Charity-Schools* dispersed throughout the Nation; and all this upon true *Christian* Principles, without any vain Opinion of *Merits* and *Satisfactions*; but meerly for the *Glory* of God, and the *Good* of Men. And did we presume, like you, to *dispose* of *Honours* in *Heaven*, we have many
Names

Names that would become a *Calendar* better than any that are *properly* yours. Not to mention *private* Persons: You cannot yet have forgotten the two *Royal* Sisters, now with God; both of them more *illustrious* for their *Piety* and *Virtue*, than for the *Crowns* they wore. And if you want a *living* Instance, the Subject we have been upon, will direct you to *Her Royal Highness* the *Princess of Wales*.

Rom. Pr. I must confess, I envy you this *Honour*. We were once in *Hopes* to have made Her *ours*. It is strange, that nothing could open the Eyes of so *discerning* a Person.

Prot. Min. Had she been less *discerning*, had her Eyes been shut to any thing but the *Glories* of this World, she had been *Yours*. Had she fallen, she had been almost excusable, considering the *Violence* of her *Temptations*, and the *fatal* *Precedents* some of her *Neighbours* had given her. But she, turning her Eyes from them, looked unto *Jesus*, the *Author* and *Finisher* of her *Faith*; and, by his Example, when the *Kingdoms* of the *World*, and the

the *Glories* of them, were set before her, with a truly *Christian Magnanimity* she despised them all. Good God! What a noble Conquest was this! What Joy did it bring to all good Men upon Earth, and even to the *Angels* in Heaven? For, since there is Joy in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth, there can be no less over a Saint persevering under *Trials*; and no doubt but the blessed Spirits there, exulted upon the *Issue* of this Conflict, praised God for giving her the *Victory*, and, in *Extasies* of Joy, magnified Him for this glorious *Triumph* of *divine* Grace. Blessed, for ever blessed, be the *Goodness* of God, who, in *Mercy* to Her and Us, establish'd her in the Profession of his Truth, and preserved her for the *Good* of this Church and Nation. May the same God continue to bless her; and since she cannot enjoy the Glory of the *British* Crown without the *Demise* of the King, which I dare say, she cannot think of without *Horror*, may she long have the Satisfaction of seeing Him Reign in Peace. And at last, when God shall call Him to a *never-fading* Crown, may she see this flourish

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rish upon the *Head* of Her Royal Con-
fort ; after whom, may it be trans-
mitted to their *Issue*, and flourish on
theirs and their *Posterities* Heads from
Generation to Generation.

Rom. Pr. Since you are in your
Raptures upon that Subject, e'en
Fare you well.

F I N I S

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